

# LUKE CAGE

WALKER · BLAKE · MENYZ

003  
MARVEL

POWER MAN  
GO  
HOME



While imprisoned for a crime he did not commit, **Luke Cage** was subjected to medical experiments that gave him superhuman strength and bulletproof skin. Once free, he used his abilities to become a Hero for Hire, protecting people who had nowhere else to turn. His mission has taken him to Wakanda, the Savage Land, even Avengers Mansion, but Luke has never forgotten where he came from.

In New Orleans for the funeral of Dr. Burstein, who gave Luke his powers, Luke met Cyril Morgan, a man whose son's disease had been cured by Burstein. Leaving Morgan's mansion, Luke was attacked by a man with a sword that pierced his skin, then rescued by Burstein's first test subject,

Mitchell Tanner (A.K.A. Warhawk). Warhawk introduced Luke to more recipients of the Burstein Process, all with powers like Luke's plus a side effect: mania that must be suppressed with medication. Meanwhile, Burstein's assistant, Dr. Lenore Mornay, was kidnapped by crime boss Mateo Corello, who wanted her to re-create the medication for his son, another Burstein test subject. But she failed. Frankie Corello killed his father, and Lenore's next if Luke can't save her in time.

**David F. Walker**  
Writer

**Nelson Blake II**  
Artist

**Marcio Menyz**  
Color Artist

**VC's Joe Sabino**  
Letterer

**Rahzzah**  
Cover Artist

**Julian Totino Tedesco**  
Variant Cover Artist

**Kathleen Wisneski**  
Assistant Editor

**Jake Thomas**  
Editor

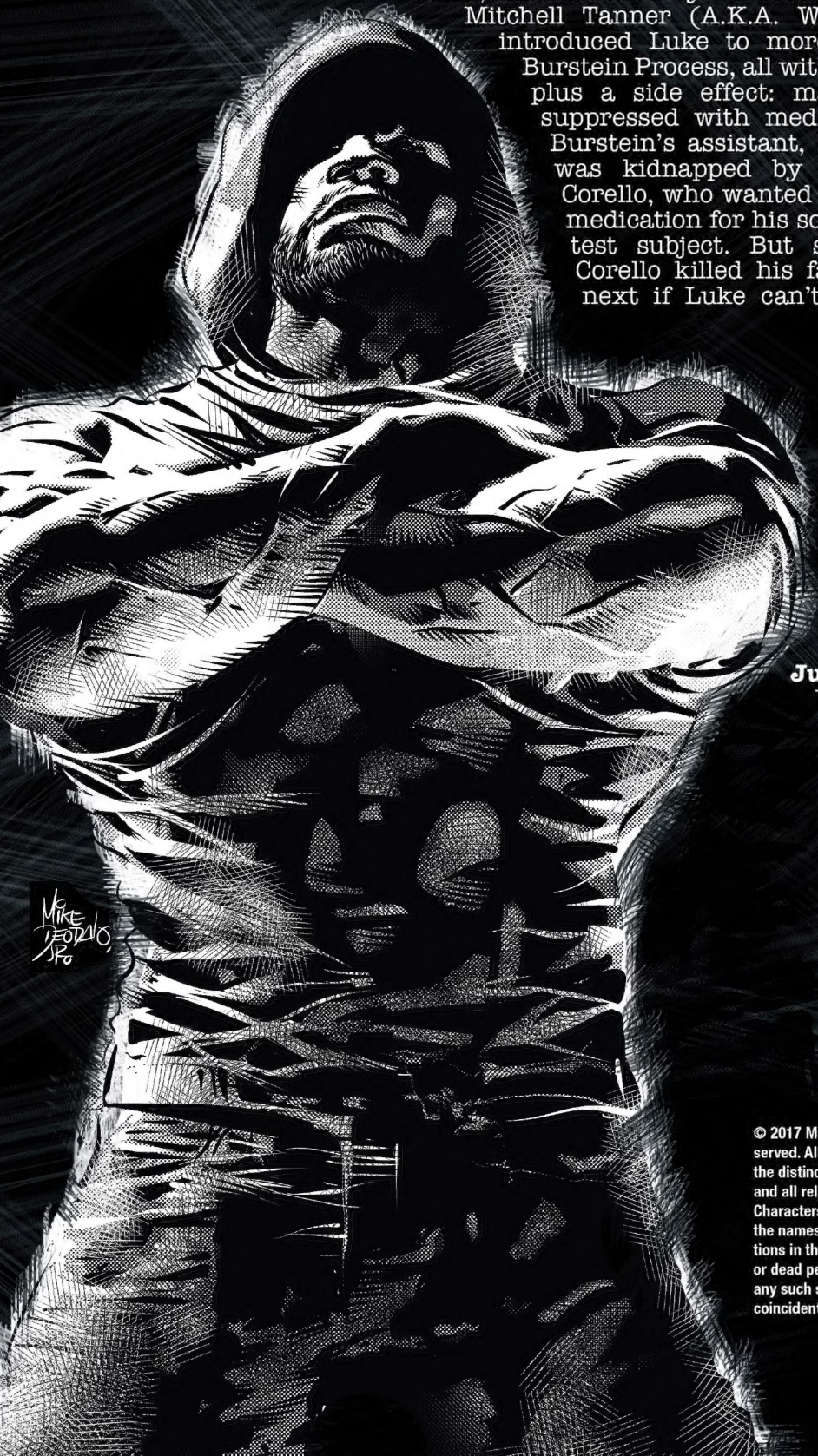
**Axel Alonso**  
Editor in Chief

**Joe Quesada**  
Chief Creative Officer

**Dan Buckley**  
President

**Alan Fine**  
Executive Producer

© 2017 Marvel Characters, Inc. All rights reserved. All characters featured in this issue and the distinctive names and likenesses thereof, and all related indicia are trademarks of Marvel Characters, Inc. No similarity between any of the names, characters, persons, and/or institutions in this magazine with those of any living or dead person or institution is intended, and any such similarity which may exist is purely coincidental. WWW.MARVEL.COM





**NEW ORLEANS.  
MONTHS AGO.**

I GET  
CONFUSED  
SOMETIMES. I  
CAN'T...WHAT'S  
THE WORD...  
FOCUS.

BUT I GET  
ANGRY...THEN I  
CAN FOCUS.

NO  
CONFUSION.  
JUST ANGER.

THAT'S WHEN  
I KILL. IT'S THE ONLY  
TIME I'M NOT CONFUSED--  
THE ONLY TIME I HAVE A  
SENSE OF...NOT FOCUS...  
WHAT'S THE WORD?

CERTAINTY.

LET ME ASK  
YOU SOMETHING,  
MITCHELL--

MY NAME IS  
WARHAWK.

NO, YOUR  
NAME IS MITCHELL  
TANNER, AND THAT'S  
WHAT I'M CALLING YOU.  
NOW, TELL ME...HOW  
DOES THE KILLING  
MAKE YOU FEEL?

I...DON'T  
KNOW.

PART OF ME  
DOESN'T WANT  
TO DO IT...I THINK.  
THE ANGER IS THE  
ONLY THING I'M  
CERTAIN ABOUT.

PUT THIS  
ON AND BREATHE  
IN DEEPLY.

YOU'RE HERE  
TO GET BETTER,  
MITCHELL.

WHY AM I  
HERE?

AND THIS  
WILL MAKE ME  
BETTER?

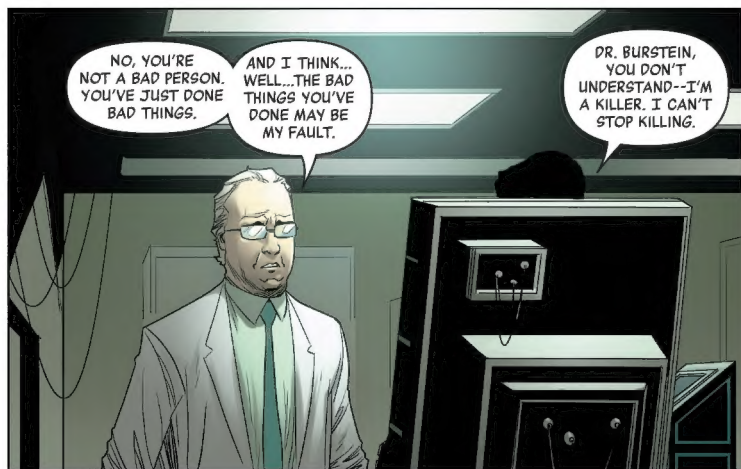
I WON'T BE AS  
CONFUSED?

I DON'T  
KNOW ABOUT THE  
CONFUSION, MITCHELL--  
I REALLY DON'T. BUT  
THIS WILL HELP WITH  
THE ANGER.

I DON'T  
KNOW WHY  
I'M HERE.  
I'M...

...A  
VERY BAD  
PERSON.







**NEW ORLEANS.  
NOW.**



LOOK WHAT  
HE DID TO MY  
CAR!

**Y**OU EVER HAVE  
A DREAM WITHIN  
A DREAM?

FORGET  
ABOUT THE  
CAR!

A NIGHTMARE WITHIN  
A NIGHTMARE?

**LUNGH!**



OH, GOD...  
IT WASN'T  
SUPPOSED TO  
BE LIKE THIS.



WE GOTTA  
DO SOMETHING--THE  
BOSS IS DEAD AND  
FRANKIE'S OUTTA  
CONTROL!

**YOU WAKE  
FROM ONE...**

GET OFF  
ME!

GONNA RIP  
YOUR LUNGS  
OUT THROUGH  
YOUR STUPID  
MOUTH!

SWEET  
CHRISTMAS!







...ONLY TO FIND YOURSELF TRAPPED IN ANOTHER.

AT LEAST THAT'S WHAT IT SEEMS LIKE.

TRUTH IS--THE HARD, COLD REALITY--YOUR WORLD HAS GONE TO HELL, AND THERE AIN'T A DAMN THING YOU CAN DO ABOUT IT...



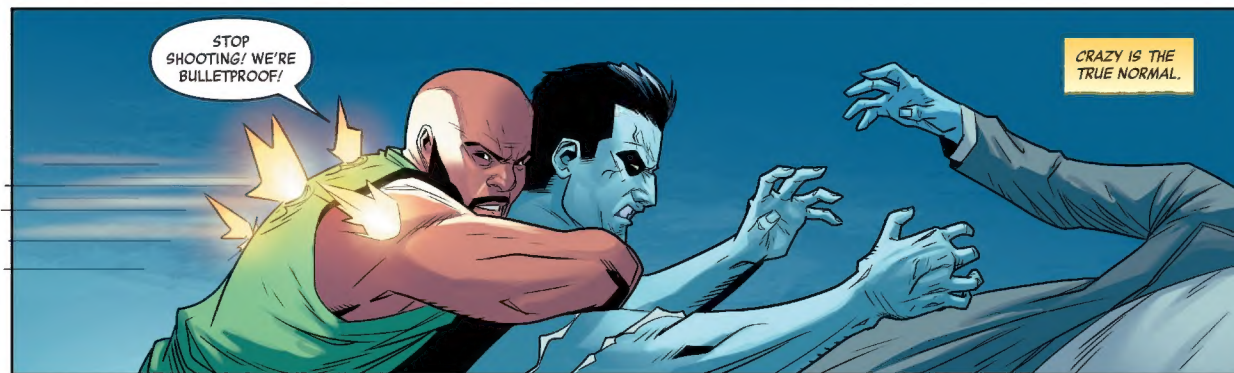
...CAUSE THERE AIN'T NO WAKIN' UP FROM SOME NIGHTMARES.

BEEN TAKIN' EXTRA VITAMINS, FRANKIE?



YOU JUST LIVE THROUGH 'EM, AND HOPE THE WORLD WILL RETURN TO NORMAL.

LIKE NORMAL IS A REAL THING.



STOP SHOOTING! WE'RE BULLETPROOF!

CRAZY IS THE TRUE NORMAL.



QUIT HORSING AROUND AND DROP THIS FOOL, CAGE!

HE WRECKED MY CAR!

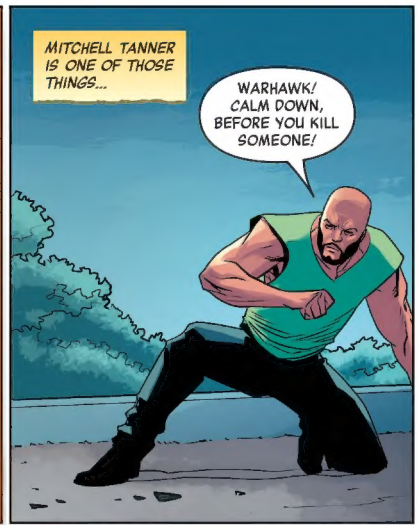
EVERYTHING IS INSANE...





...IT'S JUST THAT SOME THINGS ARE MORE INSANE THAN OTHERS.

NOBODY TOUCHES MY CAR!



MITCHELL TANNER IS ONE OF THOSE THINGS...

WARHAWK! CALM DOWN, BEFORE YOU KILL SOMEONE!



GET THIS FREAK OFFA FRANKIE!

CAR WRECKER!

...A CROSS BETWEEN THE GETO BOYS' "MIND PLAYIN' TRICKS ON ME" AND CYPRESS HILL'S "INSANE IN THE BRAIN"...



OKAY...

...AND A WHOLE LOT OF BLACK SABBATH'S "PARANOID" THROWN IN FOR GOOD MEASURE.



HIS INSANITY IS...A FORCE OF NATURE.

...YOU IDIOTS ARE JUST MAKING THIS WORSE!



YOU THINK IT'S BAD NOW? JUST WAIT.

I AIN'T WAITIN' FOR NOTHIN'.

LEFT MY PATIENCE BACK HOME, SO I'M ALL OUT.

IT'S AN OCEAN WAVE THAT CRASHES YOU TO THE SHORE...





...AND IT'S THE UNDERTOW  
THAT DRAGS YOU BACK  
OUT TO SEA.

IT'S YOUR  
FUNERAL!



OVER AND OVER  
AGAIN--

DAMN!

FORGOT  
WHAT THESE  
BLADES CAN  
DO!



BLADONK

HEADS  
UP!

IT'S  
UNRELENTING.



YOU LOSE ALL SENSE OF  
REALITY AS THE WAVES  
POUND YOU--YOU CAN'T  
SEE OR BREATHE.

YOUR LUNGS  
START TO FILL.



THE NEXT THING  
YOU KNOW, YOU'RE  
DROWNING IN  
INSANITY.

I'M ABOUT  
TO WRECK WAY  
MORE THAN  
YOUR CAR!

YOU  
AND WHAT  
ARMY?!



DON'T NEED AN  
ARMY!



JUST NEED  
THIS!

AND THAT'S THE BEST  
WAY TO DESCRIBE  
MITCHELL TANNER...











**THE HOME OF  
CYRIL MORGAN.  
LATER.**

...I APPRECIATE  
YOU GIVING ME THE  
HEADS-UP ON THIS.  
HOW BAD IS THE  
SITUATION?

CAN'T  
LIE TO  
YOU...

...THIS PLACE  
LOOKS LIKE A WAR  
ZONE. CORELLO IS  
DEAD--SAME GOES  
FOR HIS SON.

THE FEDS HAD  
THIS PLACE UNDER  
SURVEILLANCE, SO  
THIS IS GOING TO  
END UP BEING  
THEIR CASE.

IF THEY FIND  
ANYTHING THAT  
LEADS BACK TO YOU,  
MR. MORGAN...

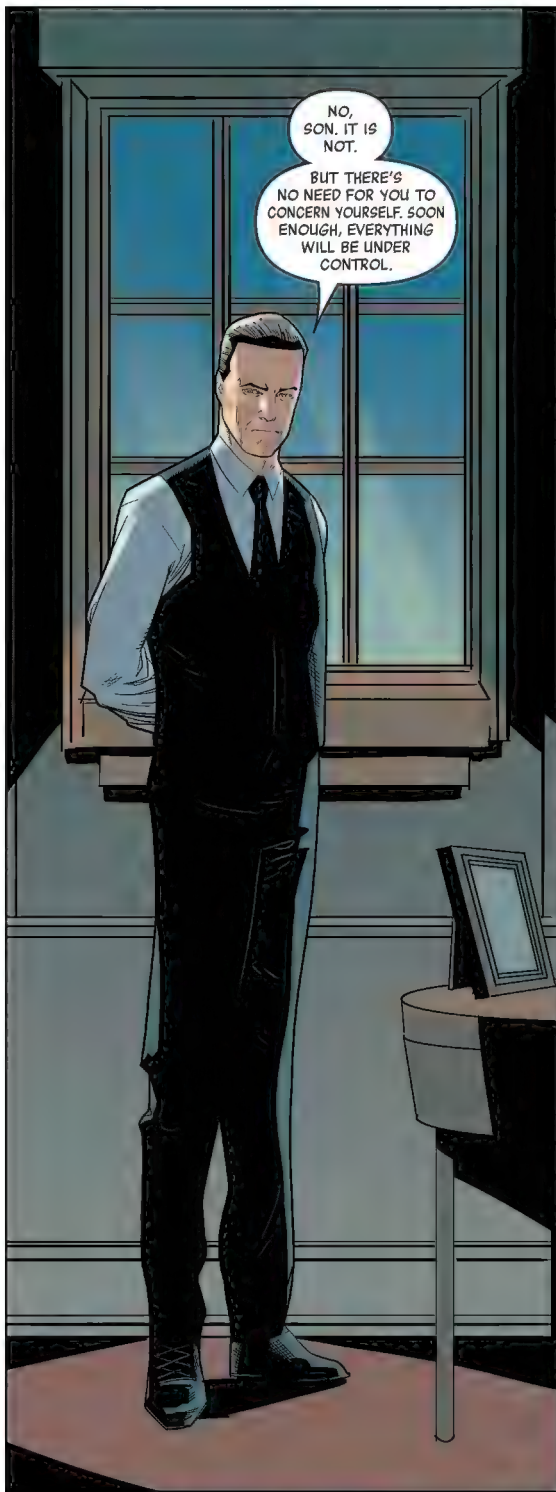
POLICE LINE DO NOT CROSS

...THERE'S  
NOTHING I CAN  
DO ABOUT IT.

UNDERSTOOD.  
I'LL REACH OUT  
TO MY PEOPLE IN THE  
BUREAU. YOUR WORK  
IS DONE. THANK  
YOU.

DAD?  
IS  
EVERYTHING...  
OKAY?





NO, SON. IT IS NOT.

BUT THERE'S NO NEED FOR YOU TO CONCERN YOURSELF. SOON ENOUGH, EVERYTHING WILL BE UNDER CONTROL.



I'M SORRY. THIS IS MY FAULT.

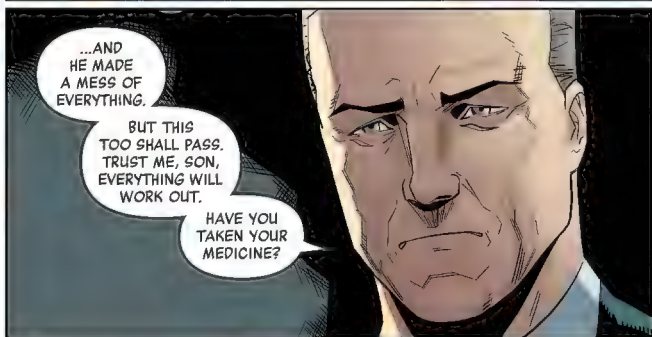
NO, CALEB, YOU MUSTN'T THINK THAT.



BUT ALL OF THIS IS BECAUSE OF ME...

NO. THIS IS NOT BECAUSE OF YOU.

IF THERE'S ANYONE TO BLAME, IT'S BURSTEIN. I OFFERED HIM THE WORLD...



...AND HE MADE A MESS OF EVERYTHING.

BUT THIS TOO SHALL PASS. TRUST ME, SON, EVERYTHING WILL WORK OUT.

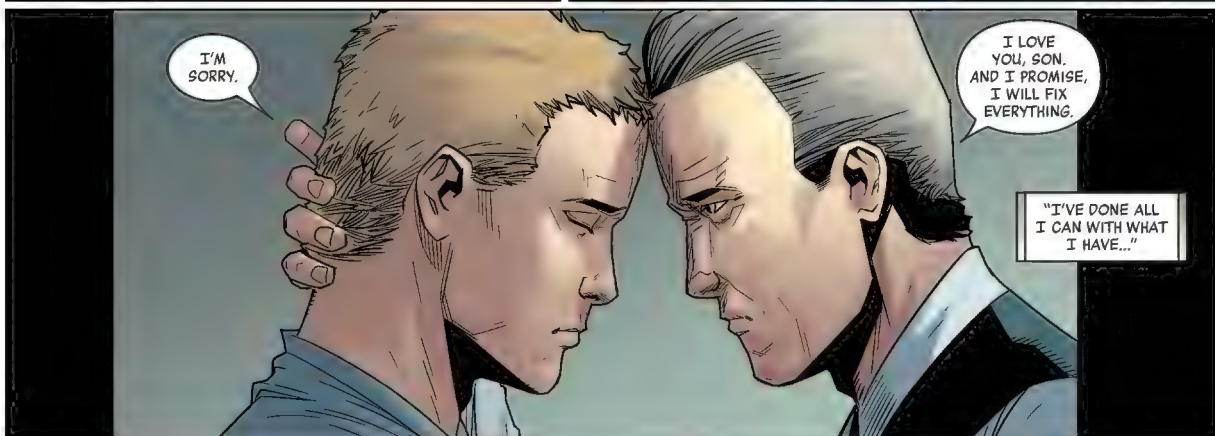
HAVE YOU TAKEN YOUR MEDICINE?



RIGHT HERE.

TAKING IT NOW.

GOOD. THE LAST THING WE NEED IS YOU...GETTING SICK AGAIN.

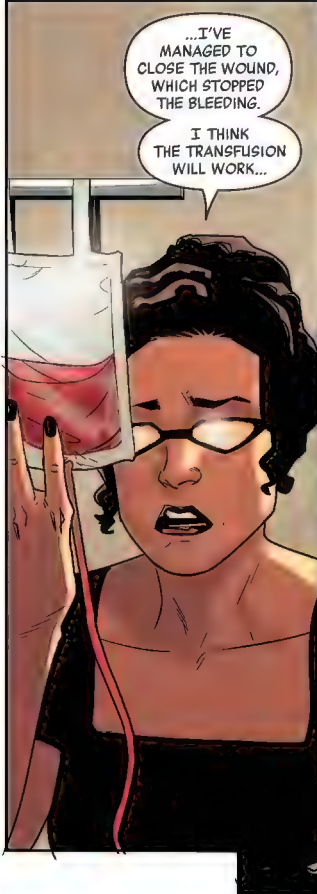


I'M SORRY.

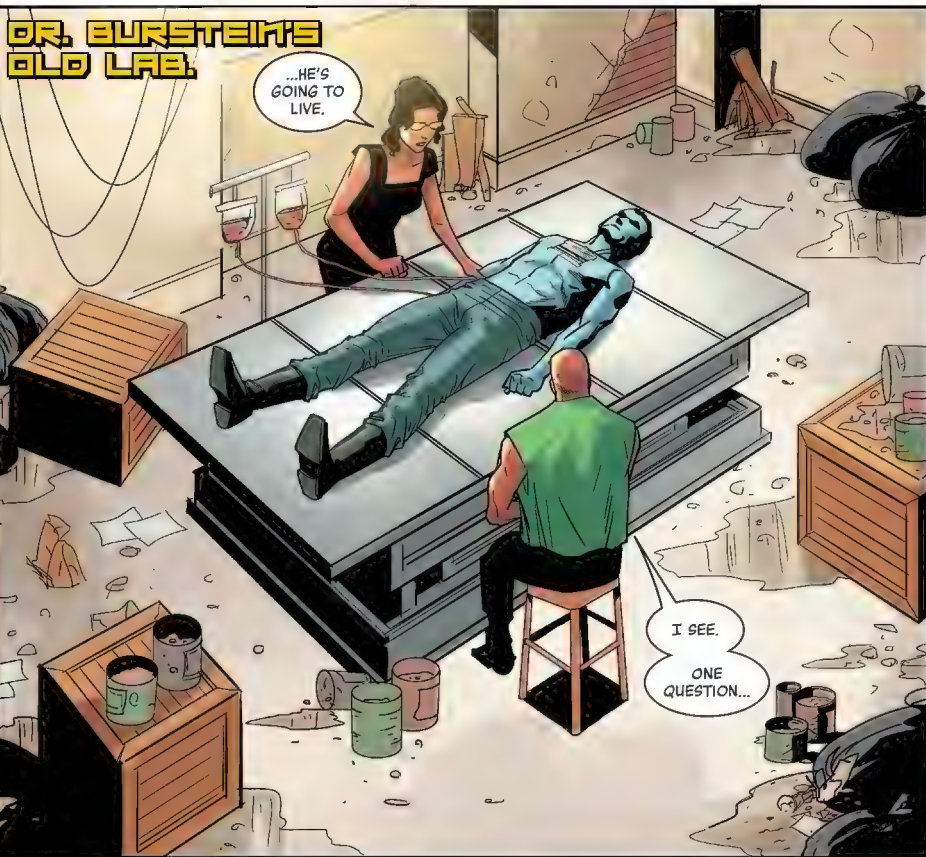
I LOVE YOU, SON. AND I PROMISE, I WILL FIX EVERYTHING.

"I'VE DONE ALL I CAN WITH WHAT I HAVE..."





## DR. BURSTEIN'S OLD LAB.







...I DON'T WANT YOUR DAMN APOLOGIES.

...I WANT TO KNOW WHAT I'M CAUGHT UP IN. TWO DEAD BODIES--AT LEAST TWO--AND A MAN WITH UNBREAKABLE SKIN WHO NOW HAS A HOLE IN HIS CHEST.

OUTSIDE OF TANNER, THE ONLY ONE CONNECTING ALL THESE THREADS IS YOU. SO TALK.



CORELLO-- THE MAN WHO KIDNAPPED ME-- HE...



...HIS SON...

...BURSTEIN EXPERIMENTED ON FRANKIE CORELLO, BUT HE TURNED OUT LIKE ALL THE OTHERS--MENTALLY UNSTABLE, PRONE TO EXTREME VIOLENCE...



...CORELLO NEEDED MORE OF BURSTEIN'S NEURO-STABILIZER FOR HIS SON. TO KEEP HIM SAFE...



NEURO-STABILIZER?

LET'S PRETEND I DON'T KNOW WHAT THE HELL A NEURO-STABILIZER IS, BECAUSE I DON'T.



BURSTEIN DEVELOPED A SERUM TO HELP CONTROL THE VIOLENT OUTBURSTS OF THOSE WHO WENT THROUGH HIS PROCESS-- LIKE A SEDATIVE.



THE GAS MASKS AND THE INHALERS.

YES...







EVER SINCE I CAME TO NEW ORLEANS TO BURY NOAH BURSTEIN, NOTHING HAS MADE SENSE.

PART OF IT... THE THING THAT IS HAPPENING THAT MAKES IT WHAT IT IS.

EVERYTHING IS IT... UNGH... AND EVERYONE IS PART OF EVERYTHING THAT IS IT.

WHY CAN'T I MOVE ANYMORE?

NOTHING AT ALL.

TANNER... EXCUSE ME... WARHAWK, YOU'RE SOUNDING CRAZY.

I AM CRAZY, LITTLE BROTHER. EVERYONE KNOWS...

THAT'S BECAUSE I DIDN'T SEE THE WHOLE PICTURE.

HE'S PASSED OUT.

DAMN. I NEED THE MOLECULAR DESTABILIZING SCALPEL. I KNOW THERE'S ONE AROUND HERE.

CAN'T MAKE SENSE OF THINGS WHEN ALL YOU SEE ARE BITS AND PIECES OF SOMETHING BIGGER...

YOU NEED A WHAT?

...BUT YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT THAT BIGGER THING IS, OR THAT THERE EVEN IS A BIGGER THING.

IT'S A LITTLE GADGET--LOOKS LIKE SOMETHING DR. WHO WOULD USE.

NOAH HAD ONE LYING AROUND HERE-- I SAW IT.

AND THEN YOU SEE IT.

YOU MEAN THIS? LOOKS LIKE IT CAN CUT THROUGH ANYTHING?

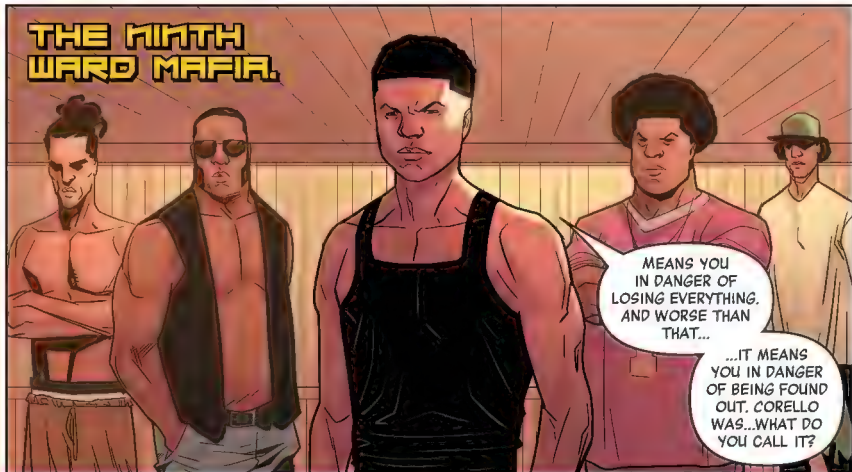
"THE WAY I SEE IT--IF YOU'RE COMING TO ME FOR HELP, THINGS MUST BE REALLY BAD..."





...WORD'S  
ALREADY OUT  
THAT CORELLO'S  
CREW IS DONE.

AND WE  
ALL KNOW WHAT  
THAT MEANS  
FOR YOU.



## THE NINTH WARD MAFIA.

MEANS YOU  
IN DANGER OF  
LOSING EVERYTHING.  
AND WORSE THAN  
THAT...

...IT MEANS  
YOU IN DANGER  
OF BEING FOUND  
OUT. CORELLO  
WAS...WHAT DO  
YOU CALL IT?



A BUFFER.

THAT'S  
RIGHT--A  
BUFFER.

CORELLO  
DID THE DIRT  
SO YOU COULD  
STAY CLEAN.

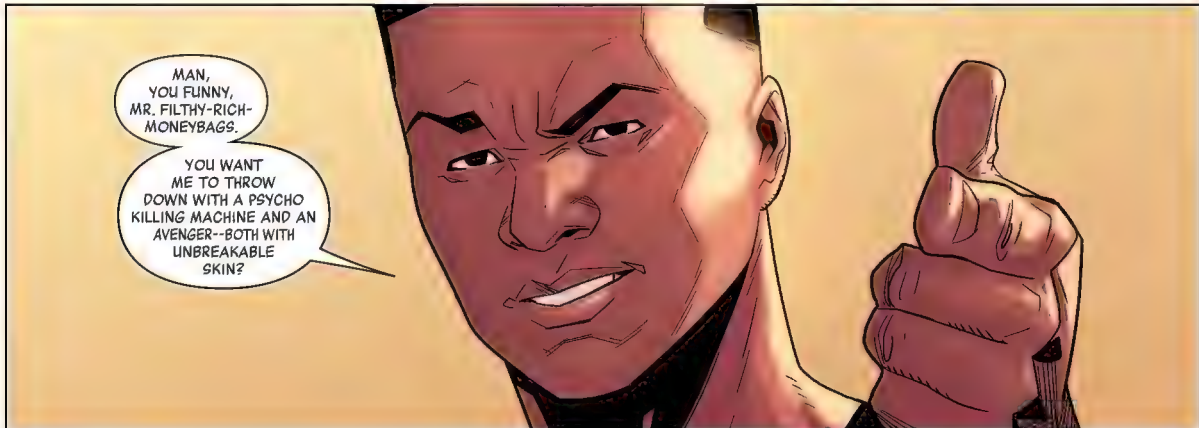


KINDA DIRT  
I HEAR YOU'RE  
INTO--\$%#@ LIKE  
THAT WOULD RUIN YOUR  
REPUTATION. THAT'D  
BE BAD FOR  
BUSINESS.

VERY BAD  
FOR BUSINESS.  
THAT'S WHY I'M  
HERE--TO GET  
YOUR HELP.

HELP WITH  
WHAT?

THERE'S A  
BIG MESS TO CLEAN  
UP--STARTING WITH  
TAKING CARE OF LUKE  
CAGE AND THAT  
PSYCHOPATH  
WARHAWK.



MAN,  
YOU FUNNY,  
MR. FILTHY-RICH-  
MONEYBAGS.

YOU WANT  
ME TO THROW  
DOWN WITH A PSYCHO  
KILLING MACHINE AND AN  
AVENGER--BOTH WITH  
UNBREAKABLE  
SKIN?









LENORE MORNAY TOLD ME SHE WORKED WITH NOAH BURSTEIN AT A MEDICAL CLINIC.



SHE TOLD ME A LOT OF THINGS.



"THE BURSTEIN PROCESS"--THAT'S WHAT NOAH CALLED HIS EXPERIMENT--IT HAD SIDE EFFECTS. DO YOU REMEMBER MITCHELL TANNER?



"NOAH WORKED FOR MORGAN FOR YEARS--TREATING CALEB, PERFECTING THE PROCESS."



"BUT...WELL...THERE WERE OTHERS."



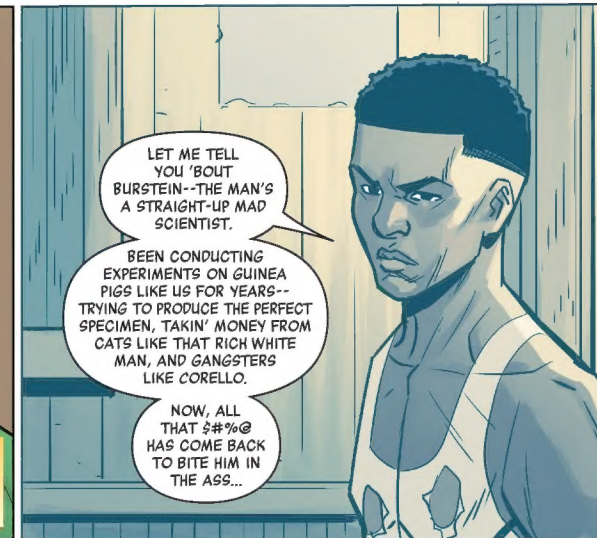
SHE DIDN'T TELL ME EVERYTHING--JUST BITS AND PIECES.



...IF BURSTEIN WAS SUICIDAL, WHY WOULD HE HAVE ASKED ME TO COME TO NEW ORLEANS TO PROTECT HIM?



SHE TOLD ME WHAT SHE WANTED ME TO KNOW--NOT WHAT I NEEDED TO KNOW, AND DEFINITELY NOT EVERYTHING THAT SHE KNEW.



LET ME TELL YOU 'BOUT BURSTEIN--THE MAN'S A STRAIGHT-UP MAD SCIENTIST.

BEEN CONDUCTING EXPERIMENTS ON GUINEA PIGS LIKE US FOR YEARS--TRYING TO PRODUCE THE PERFECT SPECIMEN, TAKIN' MONEY FROM CATS LIKE THAT RICH WHITE MAN, AND GANGSTERS LIKE CORELLO.

NOW, ALL THAT \$\$\$%@ HAS COME BACK TO BITE HIM IN THE ASS...

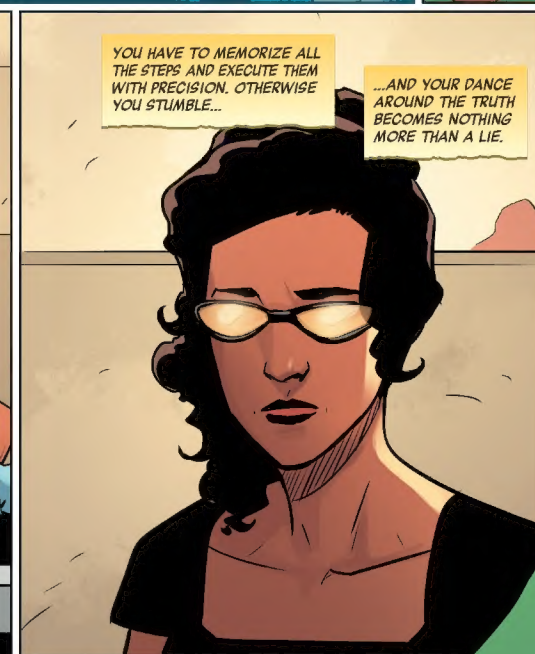


"...AND WE'RE ALL HAVIN' TO DEAL WITH IT."



DANCING AROUND THE TRUTH...WELL...THAT TAKES CHOREOGRAPHY.

ONE MISSTEP--ONE WRONG MOVE--AND THE PERFORMANCE IS RUINED.



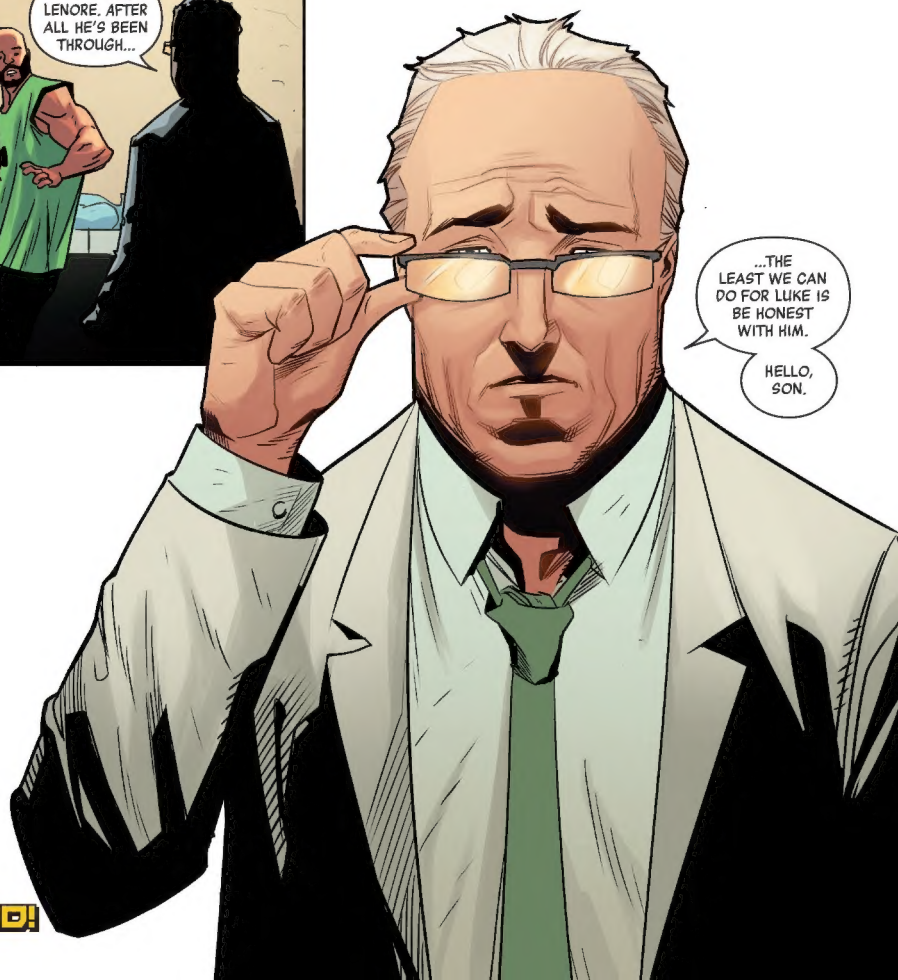
YOU HAVE TO MEMORIZE ALL THE STEPS AND EXECUTE THEM WITH PRECISION. OTHERWISE YOU STUMBLE...

...AND YOUR DANCE AROUND THE TRUTH BECOMES NOTHING MORE THAN A LIE.



I'VE BEEN THINKING ABOUT EVERYTHING THAT'S HAPPENED, AND HERE'S THE THING...





TO BE CONTINUED!



# POWER MAIL

Send us your letters at [mheroes@marvel.com](mailto:mheroes@marvel.com) and mark them "okay to print"!

**Burstein?! What are you doing, man? Can't you see you're tearing Luke apart?!? Welcome to Power Mail, Power-Fans. It's summertime in New York: A time when a young assistant editor's fancy turns to thoughts of sending LUKE CAGE #3 to the printer before issue #2 is out, so you readers haven't had a chance to tell us what you think of it. But some of you are still discovering the first issue, and that's fantastic! Welcome! Writer David F. Walker is here to answer your questions!**

I missed the boat for POWER MAN AND IRON FIST but I was there for NIGHTHAWK--yes, I bought it--you and Villalobos did great work. When I heard you were going to write a new ongoing solo for Luke Cage I knew it was an instant buy. The first issue was solid, and I wasn't familiar with Nelson Blake before this but now he's on my radar. I'm on for the ride and hyped for what you guys will do.

Edwin M.

**Nelson has been cooking up some nice stuff in the kitchen, and it keeps getting better--there is some pretty amazing stuff coming up. And thanks for the kind words about NIGHTHAWK.**

How are ya, Power Mail!

After becoming a convert to David F. Walker's writing with POWER MAN AND IRON FIST #1 a little over a year ago, I knew I'd be there to pick up the new Luke Cage solo title the day it hit

the shelves. Walker's writing does not disappoint, and, as we saw in the excellent Luke Cage Netflix TV series, it creates real fear and tension for the reader to see "invulnerable" Luke get hurt by those who can pierce his skin. A few others showing up who seem to possess Luke's powers--all the more scary! The guy calling Luke a "perfect experiment" and a "specimen"--very creepy. And a nice bit of real-world characterization as Luke reflects on the feeling of helping people: "But it never lasts that long."

I assume David F. Walker, as a fan and as a writer, has done his homework, and that Mitchell Tanner is from the 1970s Marvel comics featuring Luke...I'm curious to learn more about him, and to explore this New Orleans mystery further. Great job by the entire creative team!

Loved reading David's essay in the back about how he first became a fan of Luke Cage.

Tony Wolf  
Hoboken, NJ

**Mitchell Tanner (A.K.A. Warhawk) has a very long history with Luke Cage. I'll be getting into it later in this story. I first saw the character when I was a kid, in an issue of POWER MAN AND IRON FIST, and thought it would be cool to know more about his relationship with Luke.**

You had me at David F. Walker. This series was highly anticipated and the first issue absolutely delivers. There's definitely a film noir feel to it, and it's actually pretty funny,

too. Most important thing? I'm excited for the second issue. Definitely going to recommend this to my friends.

Leroy D.

**Trying to get a bit of that noir flavor in this story--glad to see it is coming across. Recommendations are always welcome and appreciated, so thank you for spreading the word.**

**We thank you, and, let's be honest, so will the people who pick up LUKE CAGE based on your recommendation. Friends don't let friends miss LUKE CAGE #4, wherein we learn where Burstein's been, which only kicks up more mysteries, and whereupon you'll find what is one of the best covers of the year. Check it out next month!**

See you then!  
Kathleen

## NEXT

